

MARY A. DENSTON.

APRIL 11, 1904.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. SCOTT, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 4241.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4241) granting a pension to Mary A. Denston, have examined the same and report:

The report of the Committee on Invalid Pensions of the House of Representatives, hereto appended, is adopted and the passage of the bill is recommended.

The House report is as follows:

The beneficiary named in the bill, now 74 years of age, applied for pension as the widow of Benjamin P. Denston, under the provisions of the act of June 27, 1890, alleging that her husband served as a private in Company K, First Eastern Shore Maryland Infantry, from December 25, 1861, to August 22, 1864, when honorably discharged, and that she was married to him in January, 1849, etc.

Her claim was rejected in July, 1903, upon the ground of her inability, although aided by special examination, to show the honorable discharge of her husband from all services contracted or rendered or his death in the second service.

The records of the War Department show that her husband served as a private in Company K, First Eastern Shore Maryland Infantry, from December 25, 1861, to August 22, 1864, when honorably discharged.

From proof obtained during the special examination of her claim, the beneficiary having alleged that her husband subsequently reentered the service and that it was understood that he had been killed while in the second service, it appears that the soldier, after his discharge from the First Maryland Volunteers and during the fall of the same year reenlisted as a substitute for a man in Princess Anne County; that he came home on furlough to see his family, returned to his command, and that subsequently news came that he was shot in battle.

Neither the beneficiary nor her friends nor the Pension Bureau has been able to ascertain the organization in which the second service was performed by the soldier.

It is shown very conclusively, however, that the soldier, subsequent to his enlistment and after having been home on furlough during said enlistment, never returned to his family, although the family relations were of a very pleasant character, and that the general understanding was that he was killed in such service.

The beneficiary married the soldier on January 3, 1849, has not remarried, is blind, and entirely dependent upon a son, who is also poor, for her support.

Medical and other testimony filed with your committee shows that the beneficiary has been totally blind for the past two years; that she is entirely helpless; that she has to be cared for as a child; that she is now the charge of an afflicted daughter, who is also a widow, and that she is both needy and worthy of assistance, her children being able to assist her but little.

The beneficiary was the wife of the soldier both before and during his service, is now helpless from blindness, and in destitute circumstances.

Considering all of the above, the relief sought for in the bill is deemed just and proper, and the passage of the bill is recommended.